

Border Eagle

Laughlin Air Force Base, Texas ... Together we 'XL'



Air Power

Quote of the Week

“Air battle is not decided in a few great clashes but over a long time.”

—Dale O. Smith

Vol. 50, No. 31

www.laughlin.af.mil

Aug. 16, 2002

Wing commander bids Laughlin farewell

By Col. Rick Rosborg

47th Flying Training Wing Commander

Almost one year ago, Elizabeth, Matthew and I drove through the front gate of Laughlin Air Force Base for the very first time. We were absolutely thrilled to be joining “Team XL” – the Air Force’s showcase pilot training wing. I was feeling very lucky to have been given the opportunity to command this great wing.

The 47th Flying Training Wing had an awesome reputation, and I had been watching closely from the Air Education and Training Command staff as the wing garnered honor after honor. We were a bit nervous, as the “new guys,” and wondered how we would be received. We needn’t have been. Our reception from day one was fantastic. The special spirit here was clearly evident in the smiles, warm handshakes and enthusiasm of every

airman, civilian employee and family member we met. We knew we had arrived in a special place, and the immediate friendships we formed with all – including our friends from Del Rio – promised to make this assignment one of the best of a 27-year career.

One year later, I can honestly report that our time as members of this wing and this wonderful community has fulfilled every expectation and more. We have been through some challenges together, to be sure. From your response to the force protection changes and deployments in the wake of Sept. 11th, to the tragic aircraft accident that claimed two promising young officers’ lives and the vehicle accidents which followed – you have demonstrated compassion, courage and commitment across the board. Your recovery after an

See ‘Farewell,’ page 4



Photo by Senior Airman Brad Pettit

Col. Rick Rosborg, 47th Flying Training Wing Commander, his wife, Elizabeth, and son, Matthew, are heading to Seymour Johnson, N.C., where the colonel will be the 4th Fighter Wing Commander.

50 Laughlin senior airmen to gain stripes

Compiled from staff reports

Fifty Laughlin senior airmen are among the 19,448 of 30,880 selected for promotion to staff sergeant. And while a 62.98 percent selection rate for the Air Force is high, 63.39 percent of Air Education and Training Command senior airmen and 67.14 percent of eligible Laughlin senior airmen were selected.

“This is great news for the Air Force,” said Chief Master Sgt. Mark Billingsley, Air Force Personnel Center enlisted promotion and military testing branch chief. “The message to our young airmen is that their hard work and tremendous sacrifice, particularly during this past year, is being rewarded.”



The Air Force believes in them and wants to capture their potential to serve as noncommissioned officers. It’s very exciting to see these young professionals step up to the challenge of that next stripe.”

People who tested are expected to receive their score notices by the end of August, allowing them to see just how their Promotion Fitness Examination and Specialty Knowledge Test scores rank against those they are directly competing with for promotion within their Air Force Specialty Code. Individuals can also get an electronic copy of their score notice by

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the inside
Scoop

Viewpoints:

The 47th Comptroller Flight Commander explains how the shortest distance between two points is a straight line.

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The 47th Medical Group pediatrics clinic offers new “open access” appointments method.

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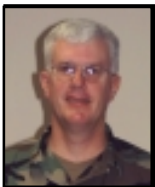
Lifestyles:

A noncommissioned officer who separated from the Air Force discovers that grass is greener in the military.

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Countdown
to ORI:

16 weeks



Commanders' Corner

By Maj. Bruce Gunn
47th Comptroller Flight Commander

A line: closest distance between two points

In a high school geometry class, my teacher taught me a very useful lesson, namely, "The shortest distance between two points is a straight line." The cynical side of my teenage self thought, "Well, duh, of course it is." But as an adult, I've learned that the most basic lessons are also the most useful and time saving.

Driving

At 16, I got my drivers license. Wow, the freedom of driving. I spent many hours driving and never seemed to tire of it. Since then, I've driven my car many places and found the roads often meandered in senseless directions. At first I thought there must have been some good

reason for putting the roads where they were. After all, nobody would be so dumb as to purposely make a rode go west 100 miles just to turn back east 100 miles with the goal of going straight north. Surely not!

Then I read a story called "The Path." It's a story about a highway that started as a winding cow path through a forest. Since a cow had made a path, people followed that already trampled course. As people followed, the path became wider and more trampled. Eventually, wagons and then cars followed the same path the cow took many centuries before.

Thankfully, smart road builders these days attempt to ignore some of

the old paths and change the course to a more sane and straight one. Frustration with roads taught me to ask this question: Should I follow the "cow paths" in life or should I look for ways to straighten the road?

Flying

While stationed at Seymour Johnson Air Force Base, N.C., I caught the flying bug and spent many hours at the local airport. Soon, I had my license and took my young family on flying trips.

One favorite was to fly straight from Goldsboro to Cape Hatteras. One hour and fifteen minutes of

See 'E/MSS,' page 3

Top Three Talk

By Master Sgt. Jeff Scott
47th Communications Squadron NCO in charge of radio maintenance



Personal stories entertain family, friends

It seems every time I make a trip back home everyone wants to know what I've been doing and where I've been lately. My family and friends both enjoy hearing of my travels to places most of them have never even heard of, and seem to have a sense of pride in my career.

I've told stories of my travels all over Europe when I was assigned to the 1st Combat Communications Squadron in Wiesbaden, Germany. Like driving five-ton trucks on the autobahn to our TDY locations, setting up massive communications sites while carrying our M-16s, living in tents and eating meals ready to eat. On another TDY we convoyed through Germany and Belgium where we took a ferry to England and setup on a grassy hill near a castle. We had plenty of time in England to see the

popular tourist attractions like London and visit some castles.

When I was assigned to the 1827th Electronics Installation Squadron at Kelly Air Force Base, my travels took me all over the southern parts of the U.S. and even to Ascension Island, a small island between South America and Africa. There we installed new radios on top of cross-mountain and after work we snorkeled in crystal clear waters with giant sea turtles, schools of colorful fish, and beautiful moray eels. That was also the best place I've ever been fishing in my life.

But this was a special visit back home. Every time I go home, I visit with one of my oldest friends and his family. Through the years they've heard all of my stories, and a few years ago as I approached 20 years of service, my friend kept comment-

ing on how smart I was to have joined the Air Force. He said look at all you have done, where you have traveled, and you can retire while your still relatively young and you'll have that retirement check for the rest of your life. On the other hand, I decided to stay home and now I work 50-60 hours a week in a dead-end job and I work a second job just to stay afloat.

Through the years and stories someone else had been listening. My best friend's son who I had played games with all of his life had enlisted in the U.S. military. He had made it through boot camp and tech school and was on his way back home for leave. When he walked into his parent's house we all went crazy because we were all so proud of him as he starts his career. Now it was his turn to tell the stories.



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Deadlines, Advertising

News for the Border Eagle should be submitted to the 47th Flying Training Wing Public Affairs Office, Bldg. 338, Laughlin AFB, TX, 298-5262. **Copy deadline is close of business each Thursday the week prior to publication.**

Advertising should be submitted to the Del Rio News-Herald, 2205 Bedell, Del Rio, TX, 774-4611. Advertising should be submitted by 4 p.m. each Friday.

Submissions can be e-mailed to:
bradley.pettit@laughlin.af.mil
timothy.stein@laughlin.af.mil

Correction:

The Del Rio school district is not rated as "recognized" as reported in last weeks Border Eagle.

ORI looms around the corner, be ready

By Lt. Col. Eddy Stanfil
47th Flying Training Wing
Inspections Office chief

Monday begins the 16-week countdown for the 47th Flying Training Wing's Operational Readiness Inspection. To help the wing prepare for the arrival of the Air Education and Training Command Inspector General team, the 47th Flying Training Wing Inspections Office has prepared countdown checklists.

This day-by-day listing of final preparations is intended to help ensure that nothing has been overlooked and that the wing is ready to put its best foot forward throughout the inspection, Dec. 8-17.

You never get a second chance to make a first impression, so it's important for the wing to be prepared to receive this inspection the moment the

first AETC IG team member comes through the gate.

Beginning next week, and each week until the ORI commences, the *Border Eagle* will carry weekly-specific checklist reminders of actions that

should be completed, or at least are well on their way to completion.

These memory ticklers will keep the wing focused to help ensure we have left nothing undone.

The wing inspections office can help point your duty section in the right direction regarding AETC Inspector General functional requirements and checklists. Additionally, the inspections office will lead the ORI Working Group,

staffed with Team XL functional experts, to ensure all inspector general reception actions are accomplished in a professional and timely manner.

We want to impress the inspection team with tremendous enthusiasm and the high-level of professional competence that exists in the 47th Flying Training Wing every day of the year. We

want to make sure they see Laughlin's best at their best. The ORI should be viewed as a great opportunity to show just how good we are at executing our mission under any conditions they can throw our way.

For more information, call 298-4858.

"The ORI should be viewed as a great opportunity to show just how good we are at executing our mission..."

'E/MSS' from page 2

flying got us to a beautiful, remote stretch of beach. Drive to the same location, however, would have required a five- or six-hour drive. Granted, the road didn't go straight to Cape Hatteras because there was a large body of water in the way. But these trips in the plane made the straight-line principle crystal clear. Ever after, I could not look at a road in the same manner. I found then and still find today that roads are annoying.

While driving, I often find myself wishing my car had wings. After all, the shortest distance between points is a straight line and a flying car would allow me to go straight to the destination. When I'm in a hurry and have a choice between the winding car route and the straight flight route, I choose the straight route. Now that I've flown to Cape Hatteras, I couldn't imagine regressing to the six-hour car route.

Employee/member self service

You're probably wondering why I brought up straight routes, driving, flying and now E/MSS. That's because the wing comptroller couldn't pass up an opportunity to get you on the straight route of E/MSS. Why not? Because it is the financial version of flying, and I like to talk about flying.

Many of you may not be familiar with E/MSS.

So, what is it? It's a web-based system that allows military and civilians to input financial transactions from our work or home computer. The neatest function is the ability to view and print our leave and earnings statement in less than a minute from our work or home computers. In fact, we can print our LES while on leave, TDY, or permanent change of station. Now that is financial flying.

Compare that to the "cow path" method many of us currently use. We have some organization called the Defense Finance and Accounting Service print our LES, put it in an envelope, ship it to the 47th Comptroller Flight, wait for them to distribute it to our orderly rooms, who then put it on our desk. What a meandering path. The choice seems pretty clear. All that's left now is for you to dump the "cow path" LES method and move to the E/MSS method.

As my teacher said, "The shortest distance between two points is a straight line." The shortest distance between DFAS and your LES is E/MSS. Start your LES flying to your desk now. Call us at 298-5215 or 298-5139, or go to <https://emss.dfas.mil> to find out how.

Lesson

Look for the straight-line method in everything you do. Whether it's traveling, working or getting your LES. We are stewards of government resources. Our time and resources are limited. Make the best use of them... go the straight way.

Actionline 298-5351

This column is one way to work through problems that haven't been solved through normal channels. By leaving your name and phone number, you are assured of a timely personal reply. It's also very useful in case more information is needed in order to pursue your inquiry. If you give your name, we will make every attempt to ensure confidentiality when appropriate.

If your question relates to the general interest of the people of Laughlin, the question and answer may also be printed in the *Border Eagle*.

Before you call the Actionline, please try to work the problem out through the normal chain of command or directly with the base agency involved.

Thanks for your cooperation, and I look forward to reading some quality ideas and suggestions.



Rick Rosborg
Col. Rick Rosborg
47th FTW Commander

AAFES	298-3176
Accounting and Finance	298-5204
Civil Engineer	298-5252
Civilian Personnel	298-5299
Commissary	298-5815
Dormitory manager	298-5213
Equal Employment Opportunity	298-5879
FWA hotline	298-4170
Hospital	298-6311
Housing	298-5904
Information line	298-5201
Legal	298-5172
Military Equal Opportunity	298-5400
Military Personnel	298-5073
Public Affairs	298-5988
Security Forces	298-5900
Services	298-5810

Airmanship

Intended to help all airmen articulate the Air Force's vision of aerospace power

What is an aerospace expeditionary force?

Aerospace expeditionary force is a general term used to describe aerospace forces organized and tailored to perform certain missions, usually from remote locations, with minimal support. It is a set of forces on a common training and deployment cycle, from which expeditionary wings, groups and squadrons can be drawn.



Photo by Dave Niebergall

Presenting the new guidon...

Tech. Sgt. Guy Wells, 47th Communications Squadron plans flight NCOIC, Master Sgt. James Martin, 47th Civil Engineer Squadron readiness flight chief, and Col. Victor Hnatiuk, 47th Mission Support Group Commander, unfurl the new guidon for the 47th Mission Support Group during a retirement ceremony for the 47th Support Group guidon Aug. 9 at Club XL.

'Farewell,' from page 1

unprecedented hailstorm, which left most of our T-37 fleet and nearly half of our T-1s severely damaged (along with a huge number of your private vehicles) was another testimony to your spirit – the mission continued unabated and you were full up again in only thirty days! All the time, you held your heads up, leaned forward and moved on to the next challenge.

The mission of the 47th FTW is to “Train the World’s Best Pilots” – you absolutely do it better than anyone else. Every three weeks or so, I was honored to stand on the stage in Anderson Hall and present shiny new silver wings to brand new Air Force pilots. These wings represent a major accomplishment for each graduating pilot – but just as importantly, they represent a huge effort by every member of Team XL. You all play a major role in the training experience of each and every student pilot – and through them, you all own a piece of the future of our Air Force. You can be extremely proud of our mission accomplishment this past year – on time graduations of the world’s best new pilots. I certainly am!

As many of you know, I believe another very important mission here at Laughlin is to “Grow Air Force Families.” We have worked hard over the past year to put in place programs which support our family members and which will help them become full-up partners in our Air Force experience. In the final analysis, we know that even though we

recruit airmen, we retain families. I am hopeful we’ve been able to build a foundation upon which this wing can continue to serve our family members and help them acclimate to the Air Force. We’ve strived to make all of our activities family friendly and to sponsor activities to keep families together and in town over the weekends.

The fair city of Del Rio is our partner now, just as it has been since 1942. This year, our 60th anniversary year, we rededicated the wing to maintaining an unparalleled close relationship with the downtown community. Elizabeth and I have said it many times – the relationship between our friends in Del Rio and Laughlin is absolutely the best anywhere. It is our fervent hope that the wing will continue to foster and even improve our ties with Del Rio – after all, as I said in my change of command speech a year ago – we share a common past and a common future.

As we leave to take command of the 4th FW at Seymour Johnson AFB, N.C., we have very heavy hearts. We have come to love Laughlin AFB and Del Rio. We will carry wonderful memories with us forever. Quite simply stated, this has been the most outstanding assignment in my 27-year career. It has been a distinct honor and privilege to command the 47th FTW. I know you will give your new commander, Col. Dan Woodward, every bit of your loyalty and support. It’s the Team XL standard! Matthew, Elizabeth and I wish Godspeed and farewell to each and every member of this great team.

Newsline

Mosquito fogging

Base wide mosquito fogging will be going on at 10 p.m. today. It is scheduled to be completed by 2 a.m. Saturday.

For more information, call 298-6380.

Cub Scouts

A Cub Scouts recruitment drive is from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday at the base exchange. An information booth will be available.

For more information, call Tech. Sgt. David Drotts at 298-5995 or 298-3475.

Volunteers needed

The Health and Wellness Center is collaborating with the Val Verde Safe Kids to do child safety seat inspections. Volunteers are needed to complete forms used during the inspections, which will be from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. Tuesdays at the Val Verde Regional Medical Center.

For details, call 298-6464.

Change of command

A 47th Flying Training Wing change-of-command ceremony is scheduled for 9 a.m. Aug. 23 in Hangar 4. Col. Rick Rosborg will relinquish command to Col. Daniel Woodward.

The wing farewell dinner for the colonel, his wife, Elizabeth, and son, Matthew, is at 6 p.m. Wednesday at Club XL.

For more information, call 298-5698.

Heritage committee

The Hispanic Heritage Committee is sponsoring a fund-raiser to help pay for base Hispanic Heritage Month activities. Tickets for a brisket plate with beans, rice, bread and jalapeno are available for a \$4 donation. The event is scheduled for 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Wednesday at the Military Equal Opportunity Club room.

To make a donation for a ticket, call Rosalio Gallegos at 298-5941, Tony Saldana at 298-5345, Rudy Rodriguez at 298-5472, or Belia Stewart at 298-5291.

Enlisted Spouses Club

The Enlisted Spouses Club invites you to find out what the ESC is all about during the ESC Membership Night from 7 to 9 p.m. Aug. 24 at Club Amistad.

For details, call 298-1251 or 298-2180.

Immunizations important aspect of preventive medicine

Immunization is an important aspect of preventive medicine and is appropriate for people of all ages. Despite the availability of safe and effective vaccines, thousands of cases of infectious disease continue to occur in the United States annually; many of these diseases could be prevented by immunization.

The 47th Medical Group is joining with other organizations throughout the country in celebrating National Immunization Awareness Month. This awareness month, which began Aug. 1, will continue through the end of the month. NIAM is supported by the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services, Tommy G. Thompson.

This year’s campaign theme, “Are You Up to Date? Vaccinate!,” reminds persons of all ages living in the U.S. about the importance of immunizations. The Immunization Clinic staff encourages you to bring in your shot records for a check up throughout August.

Vaccines are one of public health’s greatest triumphs. With the exception of safe water, no other health strategy, not even antibiotics, has had such a tremendous effect on reducing disease and improving health. However, vaccine-preventable diseases and deaths still occur in persons of all ages in the U.S.:

■ Vaccine-preventable diseases or their complications cause well over 30,000 adult deaths in the U.S. each year. Influenza and pneumonia alone were the fifth leading cause of death among those 65 years of age and older during 2000.

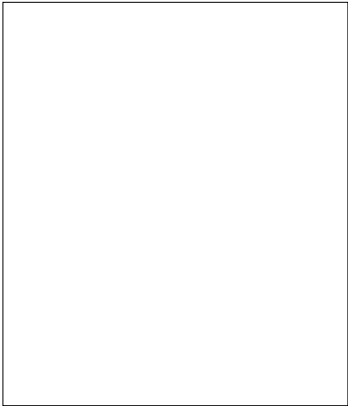
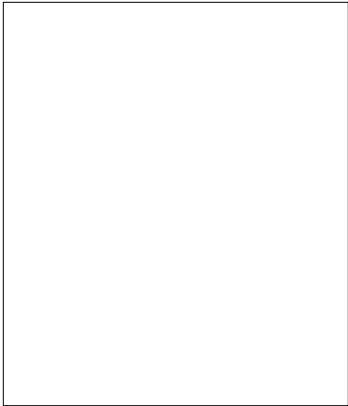
■ Chickenpox is endemic in the U.S. and virtually all persons who are not vaccinated are at increased risk for contracting chickenpox in adulthood. The risk of complications and death from chicken pox can be up to 10-20 times greater for adults than children.

■ Disease outbreaks occur when immunization rates decline. For example, from 1989 through 1991, low rates of measles, mumps and rubella immunization among pre-school aged children resulted in a measles epidemic that caused more than 55,000 cases and 120 deaths.

■ Immunization “pockets of need” continue to exist in every state and major city. The potential for disease outbreaks is high in areas where substantial numbers of under-immunized children and adults reside.

It is a common misconception that only infants and

See ‘Shots,’ page 6



‘Shots,’ from page 5

children need vaccines for their health and well being. Immunization is a lifelong, life-protecting community effort. Recommended vaccinations begin soon after birth and should continue throughout life. By protecting ourselves and our families with recommended vaccines, we also protect those around us who would otherwise be exposed to the vaccine-preventable disease.

For those of us who are active duty, immunizations are a matter of combat readiness and survival in a variety of environments. It is your responsibility to maintain a current immunization status.

The 47th Medical Group encourages people of all ages to stay up-to-date on the routine recommended immunization schedule throughout their lifetimes.

For more information on immunization across the lifespan or for medical readiness, call Staff Sgt. Derek Smith at 298-6469.

(Courtesy of Health and Wellness Center)

**Interested in
the Air Force?**
*Call Del Rio's
Air Force
recruiter at
774-0911.*

Thinking about getting out? Think again!

Call the career assistance adviser at 298-5456 for guidance.

Open access appointments aimed at improving customer satisfaction

Compiled from staff reports

The 47th Medical Group is starting a new program for managing pediatric clinic healthcare appointments. This program is called “open access appointing,” which strives to schedule all acute appointments within a 24-hour period. Open access is not a system for walk-in visits. Patients still schedule appointments, but they should only call on the day they want or need a medical appointment.

Capt. Tad Shirley, 47th Medical Group pediatrician, said the only exception to the 24-hour goal is with wellness appointments, where children are evaluated for growth and developmental milestones and referred for recommended immunizations.

Another aspect of the open-access method is aimed at managing high-demand scheduling days by using every member of the pediatric care team. This team consists of a licensed professional nurse and medical technician support staff who work closely with the assigned provider staff to manage the specific healthcare needs of pediatric customers.

Under the new system, follow-up appointments are scheduled with the pediatric nurse who consults with the pediatric provider, who then determines if a child needs to be seen again by provider staff. In addition, as resources are not limitless, the entire pediatric care team is involved in working to ensure that patients are scheduled to meet the priority of their needs.

TRICARE beneficiaries



Photo by Senior Airman Brad Pettit

(Right) Capt. Tad Shirley, 47th Medical Group pediatrician, looks over Owen, 4 months old, while 2nd Lt. Sean Neylon, father, looks on. Lieutenant Neylon and wife, Julie, brought their son to the pediatric clinic for a routine checkup.

need to obtain authorization to be seen at an outside clinic. The TRICARE service center, located adjacent to the 47th MDG dental clinic, has instruction cards on how to obtain authorization. For TRICARE Prime patients, lack of authorization could result in out-of-pocket costs. If any pediatric patients are seen in the local emergency room or in an acute after-hours medical clinic, the pediatric clinic has scheduled a time to assure they adequately follow-up on healthcare problems identified outside the pediatric clinic. This time is the only time that pediatric patients are seen on a walk-in basis. Patients already seen downtown should report to the pediatric clinic at 10:30 a.m. daily with copies of any medical instructions they were given by the clinic that saw them.

Upon determination of a need for a follow-up evaluation with the staff pediatrician, the clinic nurse will schedule a follow-up appointment with the staff pediatrician or with one of the family

care providers.

According to Lt. Col. Kathryn Hall, 47th Medical Operations Squadron Commander, “Because children tend to have rather immediate healthcare needs as they grow and develop, the open access method seems an ideal proposal to meet those needs.”

A key component of open access is that all involved parties understand that changing the way medical appointments are made in no way affects medical appointment supply. There will be times when patients are instructed to come the following day, as high volume demand does not change the available supply.

“Our vision at the 47th Medical Group is to be our beneficiaries’ trusted partner and friend in promoting community health and meeting healthcare needs of the customers we are fortunate to be able to serve,” said Colonel Hall.

For more information on the new open-access system, call 1st Lt. Hugh Kenrick at 298-6430.

‘Staff,’ from page 1

clicking on ‘vMPF’ at the AFPC Website. The average score for those selected was 264.06 points based on the following averages: – 130.37 Enlisted Performance

Reports – 54.16 PFE – 52.11 SKT – 15.63 time in grade – 10.79 time in service – .058 decorations

The average selectee has 1.64 years time in grade and 4.35 years in service. Those selected will be pro-

moted to staff sergeant from September 2002 to August 2003.

For a complete list of Air Force staff sergeant selectees, logon to <http://www.afpc.randolph.af.mil/eprom/>.

Laughlin staff sergeant selectees

47th Aeromedical Dental Squadron

Stephen Bennett
John Doerschuk
Irene Gaut
Theresa Wheeler

47th Civil Engineer Squadron

Stephen Johnson
Brian Tonnacour
Chad Workman

47th Communications Squadron

Juan Cervantes
Geoffrey Gemundt
Brock Kerzmann
Kenny King
Keith Pruitt
Lawrence Snyder
Amanda White

47th Comptroller Flight

David Reeves
Benjamin Smith
Dorothy Smith

87th Flying Training Wing

Joseph Banks

47th Medical Operations Squadron

Wyll Yabut

47th Medical Support Squadron

Alicia Simmons
Donald Trainer

47th Mission Support Squadron

Rene Sanchez

47th Operations Support Squadron

Tracy Breitenkamp
Christian Campbell
Timothy Daigle
Pammi Davison
Cristina Edwards
Jonathan Faust
Rusty Gurule
Timothy Huffman
Brandon Key
Neil Larmon
Allison Mitchell
Garrett Ritter
Rodney Streat
Don Svabek
Wesley Welch
Christopher West
James White
Paul Williams

47th Security Forces Squadron

Anthony Abridello
Natosha Blevins
Joyce Carpenter
Nicholaus Carpenter
Charles Cook
Christopher Fernandez
Erin Haislett
Alfonso Luna-Ruiz
Jerod Williams
Joseph Williams

If you know of or suspect
Fraud, Waste and Abuse,
call the FWA hotline at
298-4170.

Chapel Schedule



Catholic

- Saturday* • 5 p.m., Mass
Sunday • 9:30 a.m., Mass
 • 11 a.m., Little Rock Scripture Study in Chapel Fellowship Hall
Thursday • 6 p.m., Choir
Tuesday-Friday • 12:05 p.m., Mass
 • 12:05 p.m. and 7 p.m., Holy Days of Obligation
Reconciliation • Before Sunday Mass, Wednesday from 7 to 9 p.m. and by appointment

Religious Education

- 11 a.m. and noon Sunday

Jewish

- Call Max Stool at 775-4519

Muslim

- Call Mostafa Salama at 768-9200

Nondenominational

- Friday* • 7 p.m., Unity in Community Services

Protestant

- Saturday* • 6 p.m., Singles Bible study
Sunday • 9:30 to 10:30 a.m., Sunday school for all ages in chapel annex
 • 11 a.m., General worship
 • 6 p.m., Officer Christian Fellowship, call 298-2238 for details.
Wednesday • 7 p.m., Choir at chapel

For more information on chapel events and services, call 298-5111.

The *XLer*

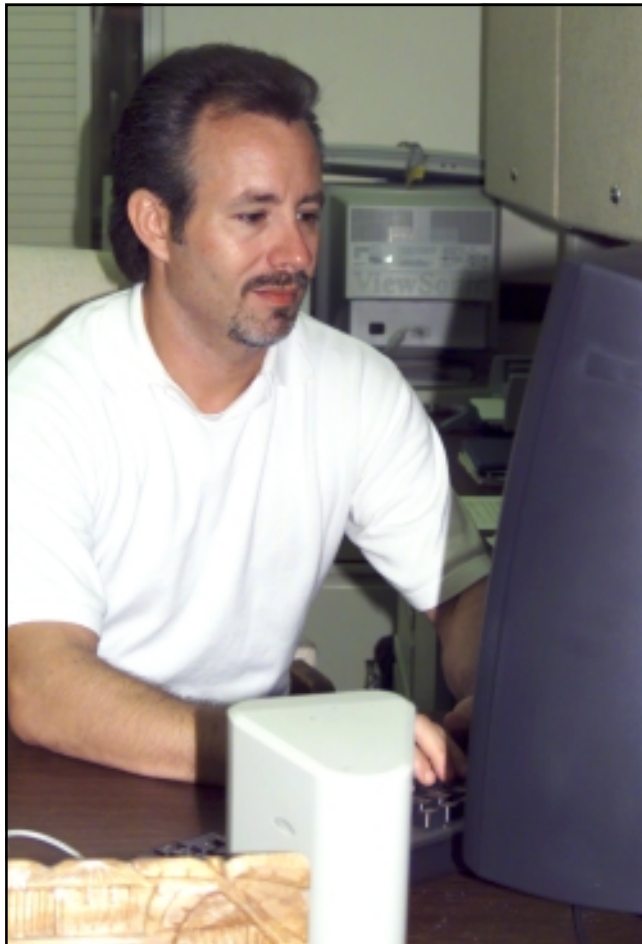


Photo by Airman Yvonne Conde

Robert Wade

47th Mission Support Squadron
personnel systems manager

Hometown: Diamond, Mo.

Family: My super-talented wife, Terra

Time at Laughlin:

11 years active duty and Civil Service

Time in service:

9 years enlisted

Greatest accomplishment:

Second place at the Air Force World Wide Talent Contest and '86 Tops in Blue

Hobbies: Community theatre, music writing and arranging

Bad habit: I drink almost enough Mountain Dew to require an IV

Favorite film:

Austin Powers II

Favorite musician:

Gino Vannelli

If you could spend one hour with any person, who would it be and why?

Jesus, for so many obvious reasons – especially considering the current world situation.



The Air Force
rewards
good ideas with
money.

Check out the
IDEA

Program data
system at

[https://
ideas.randolph.af.mil](https://ideas.randolph.af.mil),
or call 298-5236.

NCO finds grass greener in Air Force

By Master Sgt. Rob Fuller
Tyndall Air Force Base, Fla.

Taking the Air Force and its benefits for granted never crossed Aaron Clark's mind. As a matter of fact, if asked in early 1990 what his future held, he had no plans to join the Air Force – period.

Until 1990, Aaron Clark was happy working jobs in construction, as a lifeguard or as a ski instructor in Sugar Mountain, N.C.

As has been the case for many young men and women, things changed when he and his wife, Shelly, faced the prospect of being new parents and the responsibility that comes with starting a family.

“My wife was pregnant at the time, and we decided it was time I got a job that could actually pay the bills and support a family,” Sergeant Clark said. “Parked on the Blue Ridge Parkway one day, we were discussing how we would raise our child, and there I decided to join the Air Force.”

During his first tour, Clark said he experienced the normal things any weapons troop does, including deploying to unique locations such as Las Vegas, Puerto Rico and even Holland.

Then in 1995, the same stubborn young man who told his parents he would never join the military re-enlisted.

“As soon as I re-enlisted, I got orders to Korea,” said Sergeant Clark. “Osan Air Base was a neat experience and I met new friends, but I think the worst part was by then I had two children – two birthdays, an anniversary and Christmas away from your family is tough.”

When looking at prospects for a follow-on assignment, the Clarks decided on Hill AFB in Utah since some friends were being assigned there as well.

At Hill, Sergeant Clark faced two rotations a year to Southwest Asia, a future he and Shelly did not relish, he said. After seven years of marriage, they had only spent three anniversaries together. It was time

to call it quits.

“This is it,” Shelly said. “Let’s see what our options are and see what we can do.”

“I applied for an early out and was told I had to provide proof of outside employment that will pay better than the military,” said Clark.

Clark’s father was opening a new construction company and was happy to provide the documentation needed for the early-out separation. His commander approved it, and just like that, he was a civilian again.

“I started to work with my dad, and it was great... only one problem,” he said. “I’d work for three weeks, then wait for a new lot to be cleared, foundation to be poured and everything.”

It was a cycle he endured for almost three months. The money was great when he was working, said Clark. However, there was no money when he was not.

Clark, his wife and two kids were living on his father’s boat in Daytona Beach, Fla., at the time – something he and the kids saw as an adventure. Shelly did not.

It did not take long for the adventure to wear thin. Clark’s mother and stepfather asked him to move to North Carolina to work as a foreman on their Christmas tree farm and landscaping company.

“So the Clark family packed up again and moved to North Carolina,” Clark said.

Christmas trees are beautiful, he said, but very few know just how hard the work the Christmas tree business is and when Christmas was over, so was the job until March.

Still, Clark’s determination and pride drove him on. Rejoining the Air Force was not an option.

He tried a ski shop, but they only offered \$7 an hour, he said. That was not enough to pay rent and support a family of four, but he made ends meet for a few months.

Then another opportunity presented itself. Shelly’s dad owned a construction company in Maryland. So once again, the Clark family pulled up roots that had not yet taken



Photo by Master Sgt. Rob Fuller

Staff Sgt. Aaron Clark works on an F-15 Eagle on the flightline at Tyndall Air Force Base, Fla. After a break in service, the noncommissioned officer rejoined the Air Force for the quality of life it provides his family.

hold, and trudged toward another light in the tunnel.

In Maryland, with everything in storage, the family moved in with Shelly’s parents. The \$10 an hour and relatively steady work was a definite improvement. They were even paying off bills. Yet, it was not enough to find their own place or provide medical insurance.

“Reality finally set in,” said Clark. “My wife and I were talking one day. The entire time we’d been out of the Air Force we didn’t have a home. We’d lived on my dad’s boat, then with my mother and now with my wife’s family.

“Shelly said one day, ‘What are we doing?’ She said then, ‘I think you need to look into getting back into the Air Force.’”

Initially Clark fought it, even tried to join the Florida Highway Patrol, but things just did not work out the way he wanted.

“One day I called a recruiter,” Clark said. “He told me I had already been out too long and I had too much time in service from the first time to re-enter.”

Realizing how good he and his family once had it, he was determined not to give up. He tried recruiters, anybody and everybody he knew. Finally the break came he was looking for.

“A friend called me from the Pentagon saying he knew a recruiter in Pennsylvania who understood my situation and thought he could help,” said Clark.

A month later, Clark found himself in familiar surroundings going through the Military Entrance Processing Station. He was back in the Air Force.

Four years later, Clark is glad he made the decision to come back in. He made staff sergeant the first time around and hopes to make technical sergeant soon, or maybe even try for a commission some day.

“I’m shooting for 20 now,” he said. “I’ve recently finished my (Community College of the Air Force) degree and won Team Tyndall (noncommissioned officer) of the Quarter. Although those aren’t my main goals in life, they’re things I didn’t find important before and it’s almost like, ‘Hey, I’m part of the Air Force now.’”

Looking at the determination in this man’s face, there are no regrets, just experiences and some lessons learned at the school of hard knocks. “I think we appreciate our family life more now,” said Shelly, “and the military family is wonderful, pulling through in times of need or separation. The staying power of the military is the best.”

47th OSS dismantles 87th FTS, 16-6, in play-off game

By Airman
Timothy J. Stein
Staff writer

In a game that was basically over after the second inning, the 47th Operations Support Squadron defeated the 87th Flying Training Squadron, 16-6, Wednesday at the Babe Ruth Field.

Down 4-2 going into the bottom of the second inning, the OSS team put on a hitting clinic which left them up 13-4.

The game started well for the 87th, however. While they did not score on their first at bats, they did hold the OSS to only two runs in the first.

In the top of the second, they managed to put the bat on the ball and score some runs. They started off with a string of three singles, a double and single which brought in four runs. They went into the bottom of the

second up 4-2. But that lead didn't last long.

Justin Grard started off the inning for the OSS with a triple hit all the way to the fence; he would also hit a double later in the inning. David Doan immediately followed with one of two triples he would hit in the inning. It didn't get any better for the 87th after that. After a few more singles, Richard Holtzman hit an inside-the-park homerun, which scored three.

The OSS couldn't seem to do anything wrong in this inning. They received nine of their runs with two outs.

The 87th never seemed to recover from the shelling they received in the second. While they got a few base hits here and there, they couldn't produce any more than two runs, which they got in the top of the fifth.



Photo by Airman Timothy J. Stein

47th Operations Support Squadron right fielder, Paul Mitchell, takes a swing at the ball during Wednesday's game. Mitchell went 2-for-3, with a single and a triple.

OSS also scored three more in the forth inning.

In other action Wednesday night, the 86th Flying Training Squadron defeated the first Laughlin Civil Service Aircraft Maintenance team by a score of 20-19.

The 47th OSS played the 86th Thursday to see who

will represent the American League in the league championship to be held 7 p.m. Tuesday at the Babe Ruth Field.

In the National League, the 47th Civil Engineer Squadron defeated the 47th Security Forces Squadron, 11-4, Tuesday, and the Lear

Siegler, Inc., defeated the 47th Medical Group, 17-9, also on Tuesday. The 47th CES and LSI played each other Thursday night to see who will go on to the championship from the National League.

Neither game Thursday was played by press time.

Mouthguard protection:

Football season is just around the corner. The base dental clinic encourages everyone involved to make an appointment to have a custom athletic mouthguard made. The clinic has set aside two days to make these mouthguards—Sept. 11 for active duty dependents and Sept. 13 for active duty members. Call 298-6331 to make an appointment. Appointments are limited, so call soon.

Sportslines

Aerobathon

The XL Fitness Center is holding the second quarterly Aerobathon at 9:45 a.m. Wednesday at the fitness center as a way to kick off “Back-to-School Days.” The event, which lasts until 2 p.m., will feature classes on circuit step, step, cardio kickboxing, Xtreme cardio and power yoga. Prizes will be awarded to participants during a random raffle at 2 p.m.

Yoga classes

The health and wellness center is hosting weekly pre-natal yoga classes from noon to 1 p.m. Wednesdays in the HAWC classroom. The classes will include a 10-minute introduction and warm up, 20-minute yoga/stretch, 15-minute strengthening/muscle toning and 15-minute relaxation techniques. Classes are free. The instructor has certifications in pre-natal fitness, power stretch and yoga. Participants should take comfortable clothing, a yoga mat, pillow and plenty of water to class. For more information, call the HAWC at 298-6464.